6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Upper Liard

enemies were encountered and continued until one or the other side weakened to the point where it sued for peace or fled. Men were not spared for capture. As victims fell warriors wielding stone knives detached scalps by cutting above the ears and along the brow. Then the hair was seized and the scalp torn free from the flesh. Decapitation was not practiced.[86] To sue for an armistice one side might raise a slab of wood on which were painted figures of animals and fish. Lasting peace was promised when an enemy surrendered or when all potential avengers were killed. However fear and mistrust often prevented both sides from immediately negotiating friendly relations on a verbal basis. When peace negotiations were conducted on the spot, the victors usually demanded a number of women by way of indemnity. Unwilling as the latter might be, they were always forced to go. At other times fighting lasted until the enemy had lost many men or had been completely routed. The victors then displayed an orgy of sadism and hate. The bodies of the dead received obscene treatment, a woman's legs being spread apart to expose her naked genitals. Necrophilia, however, was never practiced. Live children were spiked on sharp stakes set around a fire. Live men might be suspended from trees by the feet, a separate line securing each limb. A heavy pole would then be dropped into the crotch of the helpless victim. Neither side troubled to dispose of the dead. Ceremonial cannibalism also followed fighting, but instead of flesh only the raw "belly fat" was eaten. This ritual meal strengthened the victors and enabled them, should necessity demand, to eat raw meat in the future. Young men serving the expedition as porters did not join in the rite.[87] Instead of partaking in the cannibalistic meal a man could fast for four days, eating only a very little food and drinking small quantities of water. Women and children formed the bulk of the prisoners. Mostly the children were killed during the homeward journey, the custom being to strangle or knife one child at each camp made by the returning expedition. Each night a moiety took its turn in executing a child. In winter, for every youngster killed a marker of spruce brush was thrust into the ice at the center of some lake where the group happened to be camping. Still other young prisoners might be killed after the expedition had returned to camp. Women captives became wives who initially had to be carefully watched or tied lest they seek to escape.[88] If any men had been taken they were permitted to marry daughters of the captors. Upon begetting a child the man received his freedom. Exchange of prisoners was unknown. Following a battle every man who had shed enemy blood ritually tore his sleeve. "To kill a man puts human blood in the killer's sleeve," the informant explained metaphorically. Such blood now received the opportunity of flowing out. (A man performed the same rite when his brothers first killed game.[89]) The victors "did

726 [727] 728 727 [839] 266 727 [616] [783]

[86] Heads were taken by the Tlingit and scalped as the expedition neared home "unless they had had time to do so on the spot." Scalping is specifically stated to have been done in such a way as to exclude the ears. Swanton, *Social Condition, Beliefs and Linguistic Relationship of the Tlingit Indians* (1908), 450.

[87] A similar custom is restricted to novices among the Kutchin with the intention of preventing "a sickness which inevitably follows a first killing, as well as general bad luck." Osgood, *Contributions to the Ethnography of the Kutchin* (1936), 87.

[88] For the distribution of captive women within the community see below, p. 131.

[89] See below, p. 110.